

October 27, 1962

Approved For Release 1999/09/17 : CIA-RDP75-00149

and various other stations

STATINTL

MISSILES IN CUBA

DREW PEARSON: "Here are the moves by which the United States arrived at one of its most important crisis since the end of the last war. First, I can report that very suspicious crates had been seen and even photographed on the decks of Russian supply ships en route to Cuba. It was suspected that these crates might contain missiles. They were spotted early last September. Later high-flying U. S. observation planes photographed these crates being unloaded in various parts of Cuba, and then very hurriedly missile bases were constructed. It has taken several months to erect some of our missile bases here at home, but under Castro strikes are not permitted, and these Cuban bases went up with amazing speed. Actually, American officials had intelligence reports on these bases for more than three weeks, though the photographs were not entirely clear until about two weeks ago. That was one reason why 400 newspaper men and radio commentators, invited to Washington for a special briefing two weeks ago, were told that no action was contemplated in Cuba, just when Kennedy was about to reverse his entire policy...

"The White House: At the closed-door White House briefing for Senate and Congressional leaders, Central Intelligence Chief John McCone showed pictures of the Russian missile bases in Cuba, and pointed out that similar bases had never been spotted before in any country outside Russia, not even in satellite countries. He considered it significant that the Russians had let these missiles go to Cuba alone, though they are handled in Cuba by Russian personnel. Secretary of Defense McNamara pointed to certain parts of the photos, showing that the missiles carried slots for nuclear warheads. McCone said the missiles should be ready by mid-December. Senator Russell of Georgia said he thought the administration would be wise to take an outright invasion of Cuba, and Senator Fulbright of Arkansas backed him up. But President Kennedy felt that an invasion would bring on certain war and he was hoping to confine the incident to Cuba.